

bellowing, and beheld above him, on some green fold of the mountain side, a herd of fierce Andalusian bulls, destined for the combat of the arena.' Irving felt an '*agreeable horror* in thus contemplating near at hand these terrific animals, clothed with tremendous strength, and ranging their native pastures in untamed wildness, strangers almost to the face of man, and knowing no one but the solitary herdsman who attends upon them, and even he, at times, not daring to venture to approach them.' I confess that the same horror surprised me when the terrific animal appeared in the Madrid arena; but it was not '*agreeable*.' By being introduced all at once to 15,000 people—all hallooing like savages—the menacing aspect of the Andalusian monster was not relieved. When the picadores thrust into him their pikes from their horses, you should have seen how he tossed the horses upon his horns, upturning them and goring them into a speedy death. The horsemen themselves were tumbled under bull and horse, but, as they were padded or in mail, they escaped unhurt, and were lifted again into the saddle, while others called off the bull by all the arts known to the ring. These horses are blindfolded, at least on one side; and are pushed up, with spur and lash, to the bull. Sometimes they show fight, with their heels; but generally die without a sign. One of the horses survived the loss of his insides for some time, yet the impatient crowd shouted for fresh horses. Fresh horses were forthcoming; but they cost little. They are but the frames—the gristle and bone of the horse; not horse-flesh and spirit. Such horses may be seen in a London cab or New York omnibus, kept up by the shafts. Now and then one may show a little breeding.

The ribboned daggers were inserted in the bleeding neck of the bull, to goad him on to fury. How he

pawed the dust and bellowed; how he raved madly after his tormentors; how he shook his neck to loosen the fangs of the ribboned daggers; how, at last, the trumpet sounded for the espada, or swordsman, to come forth and kill; how the crowd hallooed as the bull chased the spangled men in the rings; how they saluted those showing the white feather—calling them ‘blackguards,’ ‘thieves,’ ‘rascals,’ ‘dogs;’ how at last the espada, dressed in his black velvet, embroidered pants and jacket, his head queued and chignoned—Tatto, by name, and famous for his skill—came forth and made his speech to the judges, promising to kill the bull in the name of the New Constitution; and how the bull fought him for half-an-hour, till at last Tatto (since wounded and nearly killed), under his *red flag* hiding his sword, drew the bull’s eye to the flag, and, quickly drawing the sword from beneath the flag, struck him to the lung vitally; how the bull died—first falling on his knee, then down, then up at his enemies, and at last tumbled into the dust, his magnificent strength, derived from the Andalusian mountains, all gone; and how he was dragged out by six mules dressed in red livery, amidst the lash of the dozen drivers and the shouts of the Spaniards;—all these have been often told, as they are often repeated here, to the delight of the native and to the horror and disgust of the foreign part of the population.

Six great bulls honoured God’s day by their martyrdom. The blood, made so familiar to Spanish eyes, may return to plague some one. There is a terrible lesson to be read in these fights. I am a Puritan—when it comes to a bull fight. If this people—who are illustrating the lessons here taught upon the plaza at Cuba, where the garotte does its bloody, cruel work upon its victim—expect to have that well-regulated liberty which will last, they had better abolish this

bloody diabolism; and spend the money given for bulls and horses intended for immolation to educate the masses of the people and prepare for that consummate freedom which I trust is yet to dawn on Spain!

I confess it was a relief to me when, after writing the foregoing, I opened the volume of a friend, Mr. Henry Blackburn, and found that the spirit of Cervantes was not dead in Spain; that if not in print, yet in acts, there was humour or satire enough to 'take off' the abominable practices of the bull ring. He pictures so well the bull fights in Seville, which burlesque the scenes I have described, that, as a relief from the horrors of the reality, and with his consent, I copy his description of the caricature. As a true artist, he pictures the intrepid señorita, or tauro-maniac who was advertised to face the bull in her bloomer costume, with cap and red spangled tunic. Having done that, he comes to what I may call the 'Tale of the Tub.' After the señorita's grace to the president and audience, who receive her grandly, she is placed in a big tub. There she stands, up to her armpits, waving her barbed darts till the bull is let in. The animal lowers his head, and after some hesitation and skirmishing, rushes at the tub. The señorita curls or coils herself inside unhurt. 'The bull,' says the author, 'soon began to get angry, at last caught up the barrel on his horns, and rushed bellowing round the ring. It looked serious for the tenant. There was a general rush of "banderillos" and "chulos" to the rescue, but some minutes elapsed before they could surround the bull and release the performer from her perilous position. When extricated she was smuggled ignominiously out of the arena, and we saw the brave señorita no more; the bull was not killed, but "bundled" out of the ring.

'The next act was "Skittles." Nine negroes ("Bedouins of the Desert"), dressed grotesquely, stood up like "ninepins," within a few feet of each other, and a frisky *novillado*, or young bull, was let in to knock them over. The bull struck out right and left, and soon overturned them all. They then sat in rows in chairs, and were again bowled over, to the delight of the assembly. This was great fun, and was repeated several times; the bull liked it, the "ninepins" seemed to like it, and the people gloried in it.

'The third act was a burlesque of the "picadores," a grotesque but a sadder sight. Five poor men in rags, who, for the sake of two or three reals, allowed themselves to be mounted on donkeys and receive the charge of the bull. Here they come in close phalanx, cheered by at least 5000 people; the five donkeys with their ears well forward, and their tails set closely between their legs; the ragged "picadores," without saddle or bridle, riding with a jaunty air, and a grim smile on their dirty faces, that was comical in the extreme. The gates are opened again, and the bull goes to work. He charges them at once, but they are so closely packed that they resist the shock and the bull retires. He has broken a leg of one of the poor animals, but the riders tie it up with a handkerchief, and continue marching slowly round, keeping well together as their only chance. A few more charges and down they all go. The men run for their lives and leap the barriers, and the donkeys are thrown up in the air!

Do not think, however, that the masses of the Spanish people waste their time or substance on these barbaric displays. I know better. The working people of Spain, especially the agriculturists, are kind, clement, industrious, just, sober, and courteous. I do not accept one half of the stories told of their superstition and cruelty. I have read in the 'Times' an

account given by an English barrister, who, near Murcia, was attending to some very litigious business, and who was seized and nearly beaten to a jelly by the peasantry and people. He was, according to his account, believed to be a child-thief, and he asserts that the reason for his seizure was that the common people believe that children are stolen for their entrails, which are used to grease the telegraph wires! After reading his account, and from some communication with the people in and around Murcia, I believe that the lawyer was seized by private parties interested in closing his legal career in Spain.

The working people of Spain I have commended. They must not be confounded with the riff-raff of the cities, or with the effete, corrupt, gangrened 'snobs and nobs,' by which I mean the hidalgos and nobility who have lived on the industry and production of the honest and forbearing 'common people' so long, and who are now either absent from Spain when her trial comes, or else hatching plots in the interest of Isabella or Don Carlos, or some one else, to frustrate the majestic will of the people. Of that, when I come to politics. I am tempted even now to speak of these things, for I have been reminded at every turn in Spain that her *grandees*—those who fawned on the Queen in power, and who ran away from Spain when she was 'turned out'—do not represent the staunch and generous elements of the Spanish character. If I may be pardoned for again referring to Washington Irving, I find, in looking at the Spanish people, what he described—that the severity of the scenery, which I have endeavoured to depicture, is in unison with the attributes of the people. He said that he better understood the proud, hardy, frugal, and abstemious Spaniard, his manly defiance of hardships and contempt of effeminate indulgences, since he had seen the country the

Spaniard inhabited! There is a stern and simple sublimity about these dry, calcined, white and yellow, sun-dried and heated mountains, which makes one feel that the people who have subdued them are worthy of a better fate than to be ridden by a *blasé* aristocracy, booted and spurred for their subjection. Five per cent. of the Spanish aristocracy and plutocracy may be trusted; ninety-five per cent. are a mass of putrescence. The revolution ought to bury it in lime.

At Murcia we spent an afternoon agreeably in visiting a model country villa, the residence of a former English Minister to Spain, Lord Howden. His Lordship does not live there now, but at Bayonne. He is an eccentric man in some respects, and not unpleasantly peculiar in his love for an out-of-door life and displays of fruit and flower. Besides, he demonstrated his independence when advanced in years by marrying a beautiful Spanish actress, with whom he fell in love. It was January loving May; and, as a consequence, January made of his home here a perpetual May. We visited the ex-minister's place in a sort of Noah's ark of a carriage, very like an obsolete omnibus. We crossed the River Segura, and over a rough road, through fields luxuriant with the coming harvest. We passed up to the gardens, through an avenue of palms, and then under the interlacing boughs of the plane-trees, making a close arbour, until we find ourselves intoxicated with the fragrance of red and pink roses which, in profusion, border the garden-paths in every direction. The red pomegranate was in full blush, and overhung the rose-trees. A great green arbour of wire is near, under which is an immense reservoir of water. The donkey which pumped it up for the little canals which everywhere intersect the grounds, had the satisfaction himself of circulating within a pleasant and entrancing spot. No wonder the

palms flourished here; their feet are so damp and their heads so hot, according to the theory of their cultivation.

Within the house we found every evidence of wealth and of that refinement which taste alone can give. Marble pavements, vari-coloured, on the first floor, and on the upper floor black and white veined marble, or rare porcelain, gave to this abode an air of delicacy, light, and coolness just suited to a summer abode, amidst fragrant flowers and delicious fruit. Here, too, we find English engravings of fox-hunts and races, and of scenes in the desert; handsome marble baths; a library rich in choice volumes, and from its windows a view over the demesne; and, to crown the whole, rare vases filled with fresh flowers, like those in Vallambrosa's house at Cannes; and, outside, a piazza curtained with an immense blooming passion vine, with fringes of flowering oleanders outside the verandahs.

About the grounds peasants were stripping the mulberry-trees for the silk-worms. We went to see these short-lived workers weave their beautiful tombs. They were in the second story of an outhouse, ranged on planks a foot apart with little stacks of hay, up to the ceiling. The cocoons were already forming for these; others were living heartily on the leaves, which were upon another scaffolding. They were all very busy. The business pays well in this part of Spain.

We take one more look at the beautiful villa; present our thanks to the actress's cousin, who was our conductor, and is bailiff of his lordship; and bow to the marble medallions of Francis I. of France and Anna of Poitiers, which adorn the face of the mansion. We wonder, too, why his lordship, in completing this Claude Melnotte picture of a villa, has not created a 'clear lake,' in which to reflect and double these floral

beauties for his theatrical wife, and for his romantic life. We pass by fields where peasants are ploughing with the Egyptian plough of three thousand years ago; we see them scattering seed as they follow the plough; and after them a bevy of birds, chattering, fluttering, and getting a nice supper from the seed sown. We admire the picturesque costume of the peasants—white shirt and white pants to the knee, and very loose, and a brilliant girdle or sash. We thus close up the week and have the promise of a Sabbath rest. It will be a luxury; for Sabbaths are rare in journeys through European cities.

CHAPTER XV.

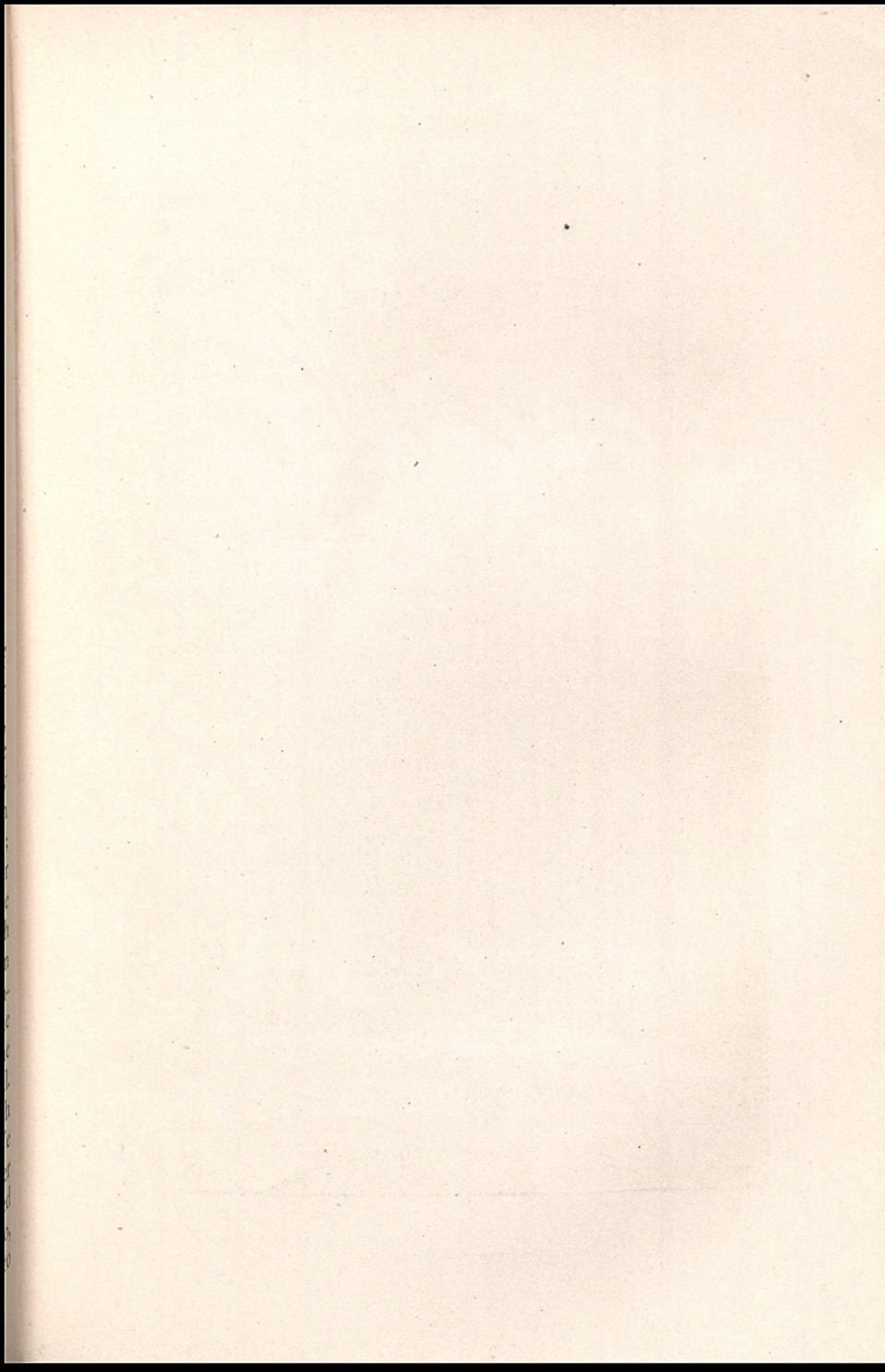
ELCHE, ALICANTE, AND VALENCIA.

'The palmtree-cinctured city stands,
Bright white beneath, as heaven bright blue
Above it.'



IN leaving Murcia for Alicante, our way at first lay through narrow streets; only one vehicle at a time can run in them. It required the 'mozo,' or coach boy, to be on foot half the time, to guide the leader through the narrow defiles. Indeed, this mozo performed the duty of whipper-up at every hill, with wonderful agility and to the horror of all the donkey-drivers in the streets. Having horses, tandem, they could not be driven from the box; and the mozo would leap to the ground and make the horses dash and the fire fly from the pavement. Indeed, the French definition of speed in driving: '*brûler le pavé*,' to burn the pavement, is as applicable to the diligence as to a voiture, to a macadamized road as to a boulder-paved street. Thus, up and down, and out of town, we dashed along; now towns appeared hugging rocky mountains, on which old castles frowned loftily, like the baron above his vassals; now mountains as bleak as Vesuvius; now in the blue sky, the pale, whitish moon, much like a speck of cloud, and hardly seen—in crescent form—symbolizing the decay of Mohammedan power under Christian effulgence, appeared; now, on the road, the carts, much like a butcher boy's in New York, being two-wheeled vehicles, with a large Jersey round top to

each, and sides made with canes, appeared; then, and often, the white mules of Murcia, tasselled with red, and half shaved of their hair, bearing their burdens; and the splendid oxen, in their scarlet head-gear; and during these fresh experiences our driver or his mozo sang their prolonged, improvised song about palm-trees and their fruit, or about the mountains so rich in streams, or about almonds, wheat, and what not. While the song was loud and jocund, new phases of vegetable beauty gratified our eyes. It was positive relief. The eye was tired of the everlasting volcanic appearance. We had reached the very climax of aridity and desolation; we had counted the black basalt mountains on the horizon, and the ferruginous calcareous hills. We had turned over and over again the volume of Nature, looking at its illustrations of geology, every leaf a twisted rock of melted granite, or of mottled limestone. Lo! at once, as if by magic, the Moorish villas with the twisted columns, and the old Moorish water-wheels pumping for water by donkey power, appear again; then the prickly pear in bloom about them; then the gardens of red pepper; then the fig, very forward; then the peasants in their tambourine hats and short, loose pants, split up to the knees and opulent with silver buttons; then a church with figures of the Saviour and Virgin in front; then some peasants on the road flourishing their gay mantles; and then, hot and blistering in the sun, the blue and copper domes of a splendid city shine in the air! Palms surround it—palms plumed and beautiful. Surrounding these palms, and hemming them in with their arid and thirsty forms, are the mountains. We may find gardens of perennial verdure, but we never lose the sight of the bleak Sierras. They are relieved only by the black, basaltic-fused granite, which Pluto, from the inner rind of the earth, has pushed up into





PALMS AT ELCHE.

the light, as ambassadors from the ever-during shades to the blue heavens.

This city, into which we are ushered, under the crack of whip, and with wonder and delight, is none other than *Elche*—celebrated in Spain for its forests of palms. Indeed, the river here, whose empty bed we crossed, is actually drunk dry by the palms. The Moors made these plans of irrigation, and faithfully the Spanish practise them. The best way to see those contrivances, and the palm woods they foster, is not to stray along the river, where there are few; but go into the forests, as the Doctor did, and see how they are planted in rows and watered in groups. A large river is thus used. The palms are not here for beauty, but for fruit. It is a business. We went up into the cathedral tower of *Santa Maria*—that of the blue dome! From it, we see first—*Alicante* on the sea, with its towers of blue and brass; then the sea and ships ten miles off; then the castles on the intervening mountains, and the chateaux lining the roads; then, to the west, the calcined mountains a-glow in the furnace at white heat; then, on the north and east, and bending round to the south, beyond the flat Moorish roofs of the city, are the straight, tall spires of the million palms, each from thirty to fifty feet high, whose stems are feathered with curving leaves, and golden with flower and fruit!

We have a weakness for this royal tree. We have admired it at *St. Remo* and *Bordighera*, whence the Pope obtains the palms which are used in sacred service, and which he blesses for his flock. We have seen them growing in the dust of *Nice*, and very pretty and tropical they seem there! We have seen great colonnades and arcades of them, in the *Jardin d'Essai*, near *Algiers*, where every variety is to be found. We have seen at that African garden, what

we never shall see in their native soil—the cocoa and betel-nut palms; both tall, slim, graceful, beautiful; the cocoa palm making for the native a thatched abode, leaning from the shore towards the sea, and dropping its fruit even in the waves, to be distributed among the isles; while the betel-palm, with its green sheaf of leaves, topping a slim stem of six inches diameter, rises into the sunny air, forty feet! We have seen other palms, not so graceful, growing all through northern Africa, their native home; but nowhere have we seen anything comparable to these palm forests of Elche! It is the sun which here gives them their commanding altitude and saccharine fruit, but it is the sun aided by his handicraftsman, water!—water utilized by skilful irrigation.

We are in the driest climate of Europe. All writers agree in this. Medical men say, that here is the spot for bronchial ailments. We go to Alicante, where there are 25,000 people, living in the same clear, dry air; and living, not because they have rain from heaven, but water from the earth. A splendid spring has supplied irrigation for Alicante for a thousand years; but how utterly dusty, hot, and white the intervening country seems. Only here and there is there a green spot, and even then the green has a thirsty aspect. The trees are all set in holes to catch and hold what water there may be given. It has rained but three times this winter and spring at Alicante, consequently there is no crop of oats and corn, although the fields are all ploughed and the seed grain is all in. There is a splendid old chateau on the mountain, seven hundred feet high, which overlooks Alicante. It is thoroughly fortified. It seems clean cut out of the sky. No mist or moisture obscures anything. The blue of the heavens is intense and bright. The shore is shallow, and bathing is common and con-

venient; even in winter the water being about 60°. Alicante is a great resort for invalids, but medical men recommend them to go out of the town under the shadow of the mountains, for sometimes the sea makes the air moist and relaxing.

Our landlord welcomed us warmly at Alicante. He told us that he knew we were Americans; for, as he said, he had a brother in Brazil! When we told him that we were from the United States of *North America*, he mentioned in a lively way, '*Yorick*,' (alas!) '*Bosty*,' and '*Feedelph*,' as cities, to show us his familiarity with our beloved land. He was a good landlord, however, and did his duty to us. We asked him, 'why Alicante was so dry?' He said that it was not so *very* dry, for he had found water by digging.' 'Where?' 'At his garden in another part of the city—would we go and see it? It was green and beautiful.' We said: 'Why do you not bore for artesian wells?' Not understanding this, he said that he had gone down one hundred feet, and found a fine well; but he afterwards explained, that the idea of an artesian well was novel; it had never been broached here. The rocks about Alicante, properly terraced, would smile like those at Nice or Mentone, if only watered. Not a blade of grass grows here of itself. A few fatty plants, more like dusty chips, were found among the rocks. What we remarked going out of Carthage is to be seen here also. The peasant has ploughed up 'lots' of limestones, ashes, and rubbish, and having planted his oats or barley, waits during the long summer glare of sun for the rain, expecting some scattered blades to appear; or, while waiting for the crop which may come once in three or four years, he relieves the dusty fields by watching and watering an olive orchard of dwarfed growth, or some fig trees of doubtful life. These he waters from a well, whose waters are lifted by the wheel

or Moorish Noria with donkey power; or sometimes, as we have seen it, pumped by a whole family of mother and daughters; and they call this—the garden of Europe! Sun and earth do not make gardens. Eden had four rivers in it, and if Adam did not irrigate, then the perfection of Paradise was found in that refinement of Art which miraculously distributed its ‘honey dew’ on flowers and fruit, without the sweat of unfallen man, or the worry of untempted woman. If this land about Alicante is a garden, for ever fragrant, flowering and fruitful, as pictured, what is Corsica? Here the bee would starve. He could not improve each shining hour, for the lack of flowers. Not even the thistle grows upon the clayish, herbageless fields.

We leave Alicante in the morning, and still ascend, according to our barometer, on the way to Valencia. When one thousand three hundred feet above the sea, we begin to see pomegranates and figs in plenty, and vines, too, which require less water. But there is this paradox with this strange land, that as you rise you find more water. We actually see a stream or so, running from the mountains. True, the land is bleak still, but we find tamarisk and poplars; and, circled with vegetation, a unique town called Sax (rock I suppose, from the Latin, saxum), springs out of its green setting, and rising 1000 feet or more into the air, looks down baronially on a company of flat roofs cringing at its base for protection. They look like little frightened brothers getting on the safe side of a big brother. This castle of Sax seemed peaked in the air; in fact, it is just hung on the sharp edge of a pinnacle! As we rise still, the clouds seem on a level with us; the mountains seem less, and some pines appear. We are on the plateau, I suppose. It grows cooler. We can perceive Valencia afar off—fifteen miles. We know that we are nearing Valencia, for the rice fields, either green

or covered with water, are becoming common. We are in the irrigated vale which surrounds and supports the great city of Valencia. The rice fields contribute more to the life than to the health of the city. Every mountain top is castled, and running streams appear all about us. The apricot adorns the earth, and the soil is now changing from white to red. The orange grows in shrubs and not luxuriant. The carouba is an immense tree. It grows anywhere almost, seeming to like dust. It is cultivated for its bean, which is given as food to cattle. The crops are splendid, especially of grain. The peasants are plucking out, with their hands, every weed from the grain, or catching worms in a sort of black bag at the end of a pole, which they pass along or thrust through the lines of wheat or barley, with a sort of sleight-of-hand. Now, English cottages, neatly thatched with straw, and whitewashed, attract the eye; especially, as they are festooned in flowers. Every field is edged with a furrow, or ditch, for irrigation. One may begin to see that the famous plain of Valencia is indeed an Eden. It uses up a river; quietly absorbing it in every way; but so noiselessly that you hardly wonder at its diversion from the bed. Now the villas of the rich appear; and their gardens, glorified by the sunbeams as well as fructified by water, make of this plain the paragon which is far-famed. Hedges—made of the white and red wild rose—here and there appear; and within their enclosure, beautiful houses, tinted with yellow and azure. So that you see now what is really necessary to constitute beauty. Allow me to illustrate: To create the eclectic beauty of the ancients it is not only necessary that the eye of the Ideal should be lucid and lustrous, the features proportionate and rounded, the hair like that of one of Murillo's Madonnas—the very dream of loveliness—the form graceful and lithe,